

Runyan's Market

On-Site Report

Overview: Small roadside fruit stand (500 square feet) selling fruit, limited snacks and curios. Open daily 7:00 AM - dark from May 15 - Dec. 1.

Location: On New Mexico Highway 82 in a remote stretch of road 24 to 100 miles from the nearest restrooms and food stop.

Target Audience: Mix of tourists driving past; locals; and seasonal regulars who own cabins and second homes in the mountains.

Unique Selling Advantage: The biggest reason to attract people to stop at your establishment is for clean restrooms, cold drinks and snacks, and a chance for weary tourists to stretch their legs.

Immediate goals for increasing revenue:

- **Attract more travelers to pull off the road into the stand**
- **Increase the average sale of the stand customer**

APPROACH TO FARM STAND

Signs in either direction coming to the farm are faded and falling over. Any driver seeing such signage would think that the business is closed. A traveler is actually surprised to see your business is open and that you have product for sale.

Recommendations:

- Remove **all** old 4 x 8 signs in advance of the stand and the ones at the stand location. Change the traveler's first impression with clean, readable signs. Replace signs with new 4 x 8 painted signs in both directions that build curiosity as you approach the stand.
- Signage should be bright and inviting.
- Since Runyan's Market is 100 miles from the nearest restrooms and food stops, place signs in this sequence as travels are approaching your stand. Signs should appear from both directions. Mount the new signs over the old ones for added stability. Cut off any excess of the old signs if they are larger than 4 x 8.

Sign sequence:

Just Ahead
Clean Restrooms
Cold Drinks
Fruits & Snacks

Curios

- When mounting the new signs it may be necessary to reposition the stakes so that the signs are faced at an angle to the highway and not totally perpendicular.
- Sand Hill Sign & Printing in Roswell has provided you quoted to make the signs based on these specifications. (See resource sheet.)
- David Lucero has agreed to provide up to \$900.00 of financial assistance through the New Mexico Department of Agriculture for these road signs from Sand Hill Sign & Printing.

Your stand has very good access for all sizes of vehicles to pull off the road. You have plenty of space for your guests to walk around and stretch their legs and check out the stand.

Recommendations: no changes needed

Your stand makes good use of overhead flags to draw attention to the stand for approaching traffic and alerts the passersby that you are open.

Recommendations:

- Continue to use flags, keep clean, bright and in good condition.
- Hang a few more aerial flags to draw attention to your stand.

(PHOTO OF RUNYAN SIGNAGE)

MARKET STAND

The stand is freshly painted and offers a variety of fresh fruits, candies, jewelry and an assortment of local New Mexico curios and native products.

There is a lost of junk and litter adjacent to your stand and around the gray trailer. This hurts the visual first impression of your market.

Recommendations:

- Completely remove junk and litter from around stand.

Although travelers love to take photographs at wooden cutouts, the two you have are faded and the paint is peeling.

Recommendations:

- Repaint your photo cutouts or purchase new ones.
- Be certain your name & city are painted on each cutout. For example:
Runyan's Farm Stand
Mayhill, New Mexico
- I have contacted a cutout supplier, Signs of the Season, to send you a catalog of their farm cutouts. In addition they have a website www.signsoftheseason.com.

There is no customer-friendly picnic site, which would encourage drivers to stop and take a snack break.

Recommendations:

- Clean up the left side area adjacent to your stand.
- Place several picnic tables or spools with tree stumps for seating.
- Add a trashcan.
- With a pleasant place to eat and magnificent mountain landscape, people will purchase more, stay longer and then purchase even more.

HOMEMADE PRODUCTS

You are currently selling home-canned foods and bakery products. You are opening yourself up to tremendous liability, Unprocessed foods made in home kitchens do not meet state food inspection requirements, The eggs and butter in the mini pecan tarts sitting in the heating sun are a food-borne illness waiting to be reported. It only takes the reporting of one food-borne illness and a New Mexico attorney to make your life difficult to continue ranching. The jars of home-canned goods and bakery products are unsafe.

Recommendations:

- Stop selling all home-canned and home-baked items.
- Sell only prepackaged foods.

RESTROOMS

Since restrooms are a critical attraction, they need to be spotless and accessible.

Recommendations:

- Invest in new toilet fixtures, sinks, soap & towel dispensers.
- Add electricity. No one likes to occupy a darkened restroom that feels unsafe.
- Paint the outside of the block building and re-letter to make it look more appealing.
- Hang a more inviting sign at the gate showing directions to the restrooms. (See sign sent under separate cover. Mount on gate with electrical ties.)

INCREASING SALES

Due to your remote location, pricing need not be low. You have a captive audience once they stop at your stand.

Recommendation:

- Take good margins on all prepackaged foods and drinks.

The refrigerated case inside the stand does not appear accessible to the public and only contains unlabeled cider and water for purchase; travelers are leery of purchasing consumable products from unlabeled containers.

Recommendations:

- Move the refrigerated case to make it more accessible or put good signs on the case so the customer knows they can open the doors themselves to get the product.
- Carry name brand bottled soda: Coke Diet Coke, Sprite, Dr. Pepper, labeled water and juice boxes for the children.
- Charge \$1.50 a bottle.

Fruit displays are not working. Due to the sun, the first-grade fruit is in the back behind the counter and the number two fruit is out front in a prime selling spot. The homegrown apples are displayed under the counter and one day was very hard to see.

Recommendations:

- Move some first-grade fruit to the front of the counter so customers can see it.
- In the fall, you need a larger display of apples. If you don't purchase a freezer immediately, you could put these apples in the space where you have the empty boxes
- Move the number two fruit from the prime selling front location

(PHOTO OF FRONT COUNTER)

Travelers have special needs in merchandise.

Recommendations:

- Take about 6-8 feet of existing curio space and replace with merchandise for travelers.
- Provide conveniences such as first aid items (aspirin, stomach aids, band aids), and family items (diapers, etc.)
- Consider basic canned goods. (If they don't sell, they can be used in your migrant kitchen.)
- Check Mountain Top Mercantile in Cloudcroft to see how they market tourist needs. (See their deer corn bags for the local hunters; this might also be a good addition.)
- Consider selling bagged ice, which is good convenience for travel trailers, RVs and truck customers. Inquire from your nearest ice company whether or not they would provide an ice chest and make regular ice deliveries for you.

There is a limited snack food selection.

Recommendations:

- Add a greater selection of bagged snack foods: chips, pretzels, popcorn, candies, cookies, etc. (similar to the convenience markets at gas stations)
- Add jerky and other packaged food product.
- Go to Sam's and Wal-Mart to see what you can purchase by the case.

Curio sales can be expanded.

Recommendations:

- Expand your curio selection by adding more tables and spools outside the stand or to the right.
- Sell some inexpensive curios that say New Mexico or Runyan Ranch. Travelers always want to pick up something from places where they have been. (Suggestions: magnets, pens, potholders, hat, etc.)

It is not clear that the bone pile is for sale.

Recommendations:

- Create a sign so people know that they are for sale.
- Move the pile closer to the stand.

Prime retail space is filled with boxes.

Recommendations:

- Remove all boxes from the existing shelter to expand your retail space.
- Add a freezer for ice cream bars.
- Make a larger apple fruit display in season.
- Move your number two fruit over here and display your number one fruit nearer the stand. The quality of your number two fruit by most people's standards is unacceptable. You mentioned that Chuey can sell it to some customers for food processing which is fine, but it should not be the most prominent fruit seen when you approach the stand.

(PHOTO OF SHELTER WITH STORED BOXES)

Expand your product variety and selection.

Recommendation:

- Consider adding bundled firewood similar to the stand at the Mountain Top Mercantile in Cloudcroft. They have a nice freestanding wooden building with open doors (and padlock) that seemed to be serviced by someone locally.

Your existing customers are your best resource to provide suggestions to expand your product line.

Recommendations:

- Survey your existing customers about what they would like to see you selling.
- Enclosed is a survey sheet that you can Xerox and use.
- Have an open jar with pencils as people are paying and Chuey can hand a slip to each customer.
- Begin to add or change your produce offerings based on your customer suggestions.

Welcome to Runyan's	
Thanks for stopping to see us.	
What would you like to see us sell?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	More fruit _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	More snacks _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	More curios _____
	Other _____
Where are you from? _____	
<i>Home of the Clean Restrooms - Mayhill, New Mexico</i>	

New Opportunities:

Since cell phone service in your area is not clear and consistent, consider installing a drive-up pay phone by your front sign.

Recommendations:

- Inquire from your local phone supplier about costs.
- Typically you pay for the equipment and installation and then get a good percentage on the calls made.
- Pay phone income continues whether you are open or closed.

Take advantage of your wonderful grounds and unique vista to get people out of their car, walk the grounds, picnic and stay longer so they will purchase and eat more.

Recommendations:

- Continue to make visual and landscaping improvements between the fence and your ponds.
- Create a unique stop that emphasizes the natural beauty of the area by offering diverse activities. For example, fishing poles for rent, paddleboats, and marked nature walk around the ponds.

(PHOTO OF POND & MOUNTAIN)

Add a Billy Goat walk to attract more traffic.

Recommendations:

- Build a goat walk in the area of the gray trailer to attract attention and get more people to pull off to your stand to see what this is all about.
- Goat walks are becoming increasingly popular on farms as an attraction for entertainment and provide a revenue source by selling animal feed to generate income.
- To get into the business immediately, you can build the goat walk utilizing your existing pen and trailer. Paint the trailer red, white & blue stripes (just like your flags) and build ramps so goats can be on top of the trailer. As time permits, build the ramping and a bridge for the goats to go into a second pen.
- Be sure that all barbed wire is removed from the pens where the public will be standing.
- Add candy/animal feed dispensing machines (see resource page for vendor). Mount these on a fence post and build an open wooden box covering to keep them from getting wet. Of course, given your current drought you can only wish that they could get wet. (See sign sent under separate cover. Mount to the fence with electrical ties.)

(PHOTO OF ANIMAL FEED DISPENSER)

- If you don't want to make this investment for feed dispensing machines, sell the feed from the farm stand. The most ecologically and proven method is to use the "very small" sample size ice cream cones and put the feed inside. That way everything is edible and you won't have any paper cup waste. (NOTE: If you don't provide appropriate animal

feed for sale, customers throw in peanuts, chips or whatever they have available which could harm the animals.)

- Create a 4 x 8 sign or mount a smaller one on the fence so visitors know what to call your attraction. Runyan Ranch - Goat Walk (see sign sent under separate cover. Mount on fence with twist ties.)
- A Goat Walk will be quite novel for New Mexico and should prove to be a unique draw to get the car traffic to stop at your stand.
- See photos of Eckert Farm Goat Walk, ramping and feed machines to understand the building and structure of this attraction.
- The two types of novel methods to get feed to the animals or via a pulley system or fence mounted PVC tube where feed can be dropped down the tube to fall into the feed pan.

As you see the success of selling the animal feed, you may want to consider a pen for sheep.

RUNYAN RANCH RESOURCES

Wooden farm cutouts:

Signs of the Season
Suzanne Gilmore
26 W. Clark St.
Renesselaer, IN 47978
219-866-4507
www.signsoftheseason.com
ggilmore@signsoftheseason.com

Road Signs:

Sand Hill Sign & Printing in Roswell
Stan
505-625-9688
505-625-9689
Available board material: coroplast, Omega, aluminum. MDO
Lettering recommended: intermediate vinyl

Candy/Animal Feed Dispensing Machine

www.123vending.com or 1-888-525-6115. The machines start at \$49.95. I would recommend starting with two machines immediately.